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SANITARY REPORTS FROM THE CENTRAL AMERICAN AND COLOMBIAN
FRUIT PORTS.

BRITISH HONDURAS.

Description of Belize.

BELIZE, BRITISH HONDURAS, July 6, 1899.

SIR: The town of Belize is built on partially reclaimed swamp land, on the Atlantic seaboard of Central America, comparatively speaking, an island surrounded by water and swamp about 25 inches above tide level on the main streets. The back streets are subject to inundation by the rise and fall of the daily tide. You will observe on the map several canals running from the sea front into the Belize River. There is at all times about 2 feet of water in these canals, which is only moved by the tide superficially, never disturbing the deposit in the bottom. There can be no drainage as there is no current, the canals being at all times on a level with the sea and river.

The canals are used for the reception of the slops and fecal matter that may accumulate in the houses during the day. This refuse is kept in buckets until the hours of 8 to 9 p. m. then carried through the streets and thrown into the canals or sea front. You can see at the hour mentioned numbers of women carrying their buckets through the streets, some open and some closed, spreading the stench as they go. Persons living near the shore often have to close their houses while this brigade is passing, to exclude the odor.

The water inside the bar will average about 4 feet in depth. During the rainy season the Belize River floods very frequently, which has a tendency to wash the putrid matter out to sea and change the water in the harbor. Fortunately, ships anchor outside in deep water, therefore do not drag this mud about with their anchors. With the excrement of 8,000 people being disposed of daily for the last fifty years, it would appear that Belize would be very unhealthy, but the records of Dr. Eyles, colonial surgeon, show that yellow fever appeared in 1860 and 1869; then there was no more fever until 1886, then annually to 1891. Since that time he does not report. His theory is that rainy, wet seasons bring about yellow fever and other climatic diseases in the tropics. He claims that the seasons from 1891 to 1898 have been unusually dry in comparison with other years when yellow fever was prevalent.

I must say that I differ with Dr. Eyles as to rainy weather; my experience of seven years in the different portions of the tropics convinces me that the rain water, with the amount of ammonia with which it is laden, is beneficial to health in the tropics. I have observed less climatic fevers during that time even in Belize. I think if they never disturb the soil to any depth one would not hear of yellow fever. For illustration take the Isthmus of Panama and examine the records; see what time had elapsed since yellow fever was epidemic until 1897, when it made its appearance again. The cause of which, in my mind, was the excavation commenced in the harbors of Panama and Colon, moving and disturbing the mud there; see Greytown, for instance, at the mouth of the Nicaragua canal route; there has not been any yellow fever reported there since work was suspended in that harbor.

The officials here are on the alert. A great many ships and barks arrive here from all parts of Brazil where yellow fever is an epidemic, but it requires some thirty or forty days for sailing vessels to make the trip. Upon their arrival here they are ordered to the ballast ground,

July 28, 1899

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ballast thrown out, fumigated, and cleaned before being allowed to receive or discharge cargo. The main exports direct from Belize are mahogany and logwood.

Very respectfully,

C. W. KNIGHT,

Acting Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

The SUPERVISING SURGEON-GENERAL,

U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.

[Inclosure No. 1.]

Vessels sailed during the month of June, 1899, from Belize to United States ports and inspected.

Date.	Vessel.	Destination.
June 2	Steamship Stillwater.....	New Orleans.
June 9	Steamship Managua	Mobile.
Do.....	Steamship Breakwater	New Orleans.
June 15	Schooner Golden Head.....	Key West.
June 16	Steamship Stillwater.....	New Orleans.
June 19	Schooner Donna Christina	Pensacola.
June 23	Steamship Managua	Mobile.
Do.....	Steamship Breakwater	New Orleans.
Do.....	Schooner Margaret S. Smith.....	Mobile.
June 28	Steamship Phoenix, via Bocas.....	New Orleans.
June 30	Steamship Stillwater.....	Do.

Sanitary report from Belize.

BELIZE, BRITISH HONDURAS, *July 14, 1899.*

SIR: I have the honor to report the health and sanitary condition of Belize good. There is no infectious or contagious disease in Belize or surrounding country. The steamer *Stillwater* sails this p. m. for New Orleans, taking 4 passengers from Belize, all of whom have complied with the regulations; the only vessel sailing for United States ports during the week ended July 14. The registrar-general reports 1 death from accidental burning. Passengers from Belize: Mr. Bennie, Captain Blanco, Rev. Phillip J. Lewis.

Very respectfully,

C. W. KNIGHT,

Acting Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

The SUPERVISING SURGEON-GENERAL,

U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.

[Inclosure.]

LIST OF DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE TOWN OF BELIZE FROM THE 7TH INSTANT TO DATE.

BELIZE, *July 13, 1899.*

Certified by medical practitioner.....	0
Certified by district commissioner or police.....	0
Certified by coroner—shock, result of accidental burning.....	1
Uncertified.....	
Total	1

A. K. YOUNG,
Registrar-General.